



Lifecycle Events

At Shaaray Tefila, we strive to help people find community, and are pleased to make our clergy, staff, and space available to both members and non-members for lifecycle moments and celebrations. We mark the ages and stages of growth through Jewish tradition, honoring the wonder of our life experience, celebrating joyful moments, and grieving loss.

Our lifecycle ceremonies draw from ancient texts, binding us to earlier generations; they also evolve along with the ever changing landscape of our time. Some rituals are familiar. Brit Milah (bris) and baby namings celebrate the arrival of a child. Adolescents ascend our bima to mark becoming B'nei Mitzvah ([learn more about Becoming B'nei Mitzvah at Shaaray Tefila](#)). We marry beloveds and bury those who have passed away. But some of us crave prayer and ritual at other significant moments in our lives – as we move into a new home, struggle with infertility, terminate a pregnancy, suffer a miscarriage, become an empty-nester, retire, divorce, celebrate milestone wedding anniversaries, and more. We are here with you and for you – through your simchas and your sorrows. Below is an overview of lifecycle experiences at Shaaray Tefila.

Celebrating the Birth of a Child

Expecting a child is one of life's greatest joys, and we at Shaaray Tefila are here to help you welcome your new bundle of joy into the covenant of Judaism. Jewish tradition sees the birth of children as a promise of the future, and our children are considered the keepers and guardians of our tradition.

- **Brit Milah (also known as Bris)** -A Brit Milah is traditionally conducted on the eighth day of a Jewish baby boy's life. While there are many Mohelim to choose from, many Shaaray Tefila members recommend [Dr. Jeffrey Mazlin](#), [Cantor Philip Sherman](#), and [Dr. Dorothy Greenbaum](#). Each Mohel is different and we recommend speaking with them directly about their specific approaches and styles to help inform your choice. Pending availability, Shaaray Tefila clergy are honored to attend your child's bris.
- **Baby Naming** - Giving a child a Hebrew name is considered one of the first Jewish gifts a parent can give a new baby. It is a tie to the past and a platform for one's identity. Shaaray Tefila clergy are available to officiate your child's baby naming as part of our Erev Shabbat or Shabbat morning services. Under certain circumstances and

pending availability, Shaaray Tefila clergy may officiate namings for members onsite. [Please contact Amy Schwach](#) to inquire about availability.

There is **no charge for members** for a naming during Shabbat Services, or for an offsite naming or brit milah, with the exception of all clergy travel expenses and accommodations. Typically, members make a donation to clergy discretionary funds as an expression of gratitude for the officiating clergy. The **non-member cost** for a naming is **\$360** and non-member nursery school family cost is **\$180**. Costs include the baby naming or brit milah ceremony as well a meeting with the officiating clergy.

Regarding space rentals for a Baby Naming or Bris, Shaaray Tefila is pleased to rent out our social halls for a reception following a baby naming or bris ceremony. The room rental fee for the reception (up to two hours) is **\$1,300 for members** (\$600 for every hour thereafter) and **\$2,300 for nonmembers** (\$1,000 for every hour thereafter). [Please contact Linda Neiman](#) for more information.

Becoming B'nei Mitzvah

Shaaray Tefila celebrates and supports your family's decision to lead your child on a Jewish path, welcoming them into a life of Torah from the moment they enter our gates. Members whose children become B'nei Mitzvah in our sanctuary are welcome to rent our space for a private Kiddush luncheon following the Shabbat morning service. The rental fee for up to two hours is **\$1,300** and \$600 for every hour thereafter. The fee for an evening party is **\$5,000** for up to four hours and \$1,000 for every hour thereafter.

Conversion

We are pleased to serve as a spiritual home to all who seek to join the Jewish faith. Our clergy are available to guide you through the conversion process, culminating in the Beit Din (a rabbinical court) and immersion in the Mikvah (ritual bath). There is no preparation fee for conversions. Please contact our clergy study if you are interested in conversion.

Weddings

Marrying the love of one's life is a holy experience. We are delighted to make our space available for your ceremony and/or reception, and our clergy are honored to officiate and begin to build a meaningful relationship with you and your spouse. Our clergy will, under certain circumstances, conduct Jewish weddings when one of the partners is Jewish and one of the partners is not Jewish.

The fee for wedding couples who are not yet members who wish to be married by our clergy is **\$1800**. **This fee includes a special one year membership.**

Shaaray Tefila clergy will officiate wedding ceremonies both in our sanctuary and offsite. There is no additional fee for on or off site wedding ceremonies, however, the wedding couple is responsible for all accommodations and travel expenses incurred by our clergy. Typically, members make a donation to clergy discretionary funds as an expression of gratitude for the officiating clergy. The fee for a wedding reception in one of our social halls is **\$5,000 for four hours** (\$1,000 for every hour thereafter). Please see our room rental policies below for more information.

Divorce

The giving of a *Get* is the Jewish ritual associated with divorce. Shaaray Tefila clergy are available to assist with the logistics of the *Get*. To obtain a legal Jewish divorce, [please contact Amy Schwach](#) to speak with a member of our clergy.

Death and Mourning

Shaaray Tefila clergy will officiate funerals for members and for the parent, spouse, child, or sibling of a member. Pending their availability, Shaaray Tefila clergy may officiate funerals offsite for other relatives of members. If the clergy are unavailable to officiate for other relatives, they have a list of other clergy referrals. Typically, members make a donation to clergy discretionary funds as an expression of gratitude for the officiating clergy. If the synagogue opens exclusively for the funeral, the member will be charged an additional security fee of **\$1,000**.

When a member arranges to have a funeral in our sanctuary, he or she may also request access to our Davis Auditorium, which is a large open space adjacent to the sanctuary. This can be used as a quiet space for the mourners. Pending availability, members may rent space at Shaaray Tefila for shivah upon request. Rental fees and other logistics vary based on precise spaces utilized.

To learn more about Jewish lifecycle customs and rituals, [visit ReformJudaism.org](http://visitReformJudaism.org).

To explore the possibility of holding a lifecycle event at Shaaray Tefila, please contact Linda Neiman, Engagement and Events Coordinator at lneiman@tstnyc.org or 212-328-9405.

To connect with a member of our clergy team, please contact Amy Schwach, Executive Director at aschwach@tstnyc.org or 212-535-8008.

To inquire about membership, please contact Lori Tompkins, Director of Operations and Member Services, at ltompkins@tstnyc.org or 212-535-8008.